The Mensa Education & Research Foundation is a philanthropic, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization committed to the pursuit of excellence in the areas of intelligence. Funding support comes from American Mensa, Ltd., Mensa International, and other charitable donations.

Donations are deductible in the United States for income tax purposes.

Information on all the Foundation’s programs and activities can be found on the website at mensafoundation.org.
We’re changing lives with our good work

I joined Mensa 46 years ago, and it changed my life. For one thing, I met Liz at a Mensa meeting, and we have been married 34 years. And through local meetings, Annual Gatherings, Colloquiums and all the other fascinating activities Mensa has offered over the years, I have made friends, done things, and visited places I never would have otherwise.

Mensa changed my life, but it also changed me. It gave me a wider perspective on life and allowed me to see and appreciate how other people live and how they view themselves and their high intelligence. It allowed me to understand that some people celebrate their smartness and some don’t. Mensa gave me the ambition to become a leader of all these smart people and the confidence to go ahead and do just that. First as LocSec, then RVC, Treasurer, AMC Chair, and International Mensa Chair, I saw the world of Mensa opening wider and wider, encompassing people throughout the world.

But it wasn’t until I joined the Board of Trustees of the Mensa Education and Research Foundation that I found something deeper, something that highly intelligent people can do to show how smart they really are.

Our Foundation is the organization that allows Mensa to carry out its mission of nurturing human intelligence and encouraging smart people to reach their potential. Through scholarships, awards, a research journal, resources for gifted children and those who support them, the Foundation has made an important difference, transforming lives not only in the United States but in countries all over the world. We are able to do all this work only because of donations from people like you.

These pages show some of the things our Foundation has accomplished and why you should become part of it. We believe this is true: It takes only one person to make a difference, either by doing, or not doing, something; if you weren’t there, it wouldn’t have happened. Show how intelligent you are by doing something really smart — giving to our Foundation. You can be that one.

For so many Mensans, our Foundation is synonymous with scholarships. And with good reason: It’s our longest-running and best-known program. This year, our Foundation awarded more than $85,000 to the next generation of great thinkers and doers (see the winners at mensafoundation.org).

If you have made a gift to a Foundation scholarship fund, you have helped thousands of people on the road to achieving their potential.

One of those is last year’s winner of the Greg Timmers Scholarship, Denna Good-Mojab of Lynnwood, Wash., who wrote this:

“As a 17-year-old senior in the University of Washington School of Music with a GPA of 3.9, I am making great progress toward my immediate goal of earning a Bachelor of Music in vocal performance. My long-term goal is to become a vocal performer and musical scholar. I began studying piano when I had just turned 3; within one month, I had learned to read music. When I was 10, I debuted with the Portland Opera as the Second Spirit in The Magic Flute. I have now sung in nine operas with professional and university opera companies. I am multilingual and sing classical, operatic, and world music in 10 languages. I plan to work toward earning a Master of Music in vocal performance with a Doctor of Music to follow.”

How could the judges say no? (Listen to Denna sing at youtube.com/user/DennaGoodMojab.) If you want to help more students like her, go to mensafoundation.org, where you can also see a complete list of this year’s winners.

Colloquium 2015 drew 284 attendees for stimulating sessions on brain health. Next year’s event — the Nature of Genetics: Flora, Fauna and the Future — promises to be just as exciting.

Learn more at ag.us.mensa.org
Sometimes a great program for Gifted Youth requires a great expenditure. More often, the expense is not that great but just large enough to be a deal breaker. That’s where our Foundation steps in, with mini-grants that make it possible for a group of bright kids to have a really special experience. Recently, Richmond Area Mensa won a mini-grant for a daylong interpretive boat trip to a national wildlife refuge. The group learned about the rich history of the James River as well as the aquatic species that live in it, and the flora and fauna in the refuge.

When Eric Szczerbinski, the group’s Gifted Children Coordinator, heard they would be receiving the mini-grant, here’s what he told us:

“Wow! That’s great! THANK YOU!! The families will be very happy to hear the news and I think it’ll result in quite a bit more participation – these grants (and matching grant from our Local Group) ... will cut the costs of this trip by more than 50%, and that will be a big deal to many families, especially those with multiple siblings. Thanks everyone – it’s truly appreciated!”
We are extremely grateful for the generosity of our donors, who have enabled the Mensa Foundation to continue its work and enhance its programs. In addition to those listed here, many others have contributed support for the year’s successes.

Our thanks...we couldn’t do it without you!

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More generous donors listed on Page 41

YOUR $1

The donors who appear on these pages were a major factor in our success this year. Our Foundation gave awards for teaching, research, discovery and invention and provided educational programming for thousands of gifted youth and adults. We gave 186 scholarships to students who will shape our future. We recognized scholars and researchers and brought their work to you. A dollar of each Mensa member’s dues goes straight to the Foundation, and it is amazing what your $1 did. But it wasn’t your $1 alone. Many members donated more and others included our Foundation in their wills, because that $1 can only do so much and we stretched as far as it can go.

Expand your reach and your impact by donating today at mensafoundation.org.
THANK YOU, DONORS!

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Giving is easy!
Just click the DONATE button at mensafoundation.org.
FOUNDATION AWARDS

Congratulations to the winners of the Foundation awards, which recognize research in and support of intelligence both nationally and internationally.

FRED KATZ of Hauppauge, N.Y., is the recipient of the Copper Black Award for Creative Achievement, awarded annually to a Mensan for exceptional creativity and problem-solving. Fred’s research addressed the ubiquitous problem of a motion sensor’s ability to discriminate between a home intruder and a wandering pet. Through readings from a combination of passive infrared and Doppler microwave sensors, he was able to develop and integrate an algorithm capable of discerning between objects in the sensor’s field of view.

ANDREA MYSTRENA, a gifted and talented teacher at Northern Burlington Regional Middle School in Columbus, N.J., is the Distinguished Teacher Award winner. Among the many reasons Andrea was nominated was her willingness to go beyond academics to ease students’ stress in the classroom. She also introduced communication technology into her instruction, which made asking questions and turning in electronic assignments simpler for students. Andrea was nominated by 7th grader and Young Mensan Stephanie M., who wrote, “Ms. M has made gifted and talented a class worth attending and has taught me that you shouldn’t care what anybody else thinks and just be yourself. This is the greatest lesson anyone has ever taught me.”

RHODA ERHARDT of Maplewood, Minn., is the winner of the Intellectual Benefit to Society Award for her work as part of an evaluation team at a child development center in rural Minnesota. She helped develop a home therapy program for disabled children that eventually grew into a larger case study she uses to teach professionals and parents across the country and internationally. By focusing on children with disabilities who live in rural and indigenous communities, her work provides services to children who often have little or no access to services that “ensure their development and participation in community life.”

DR. JESSICA REYES of Boston, Mass., is the inaugural winner of the Laura Joyner Award, given to recognize outstanding work, theoretical or applied, in the area of human intelligence. Dr. Reyes’ research into lead exposure and behavior investigates the link between lead levels in early childhood and student test scores in elementary school. Her work shows significant achievement relative to the mission of our Foundation by helping ensure that children develop their intelligence to the fullest level possible.

DAVID SMITH of Saskatchewan, Canada, is the recipient of both the International Intellectual Benefits to Society Award and the Copper Black International Award for Creative Achievement. A member of Mensa Canada, he received the International Intellectual Benefits Award for developing a behavior modification training system that enables people throughout the world to work with electricity safely and more efficiently. He received the Copper Black International Award for providing practical electrical safety risk management skills that electrical workers can apply in their work. He has designed and built three innovative, mobile safety-training labs unique to North America.

DR. JOAN FREEMAN of London, England, is the recipient of the International Lifetime Achievement Award. The award recognizes a lifetime of contributions to the field of intelligence, giftedness and related subjects. A British psychologist with a considerable body of research, including her ongoing study of giftedness that began in 1974, she is a sought-after guest for television news programs and worldwide speaking engagements on the subjects of intelligence and giftedness. Recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award of the British Psychological Society, Freeman is a Visiting Professor at Middlesex University in London, Founding President of the European Council for High Ability and an elected Fellow of the British Psychological Society.

EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

The Awards for Excellence in Research are given each year for outstanding research on aspects of human intelligence and giftedness. This year’s winners include scholars from Australia, Germany and Hungary, as well as the United States. The winners are:

SENIOR RESEARCHER
Matthew C. Makel, Duke University: Changing the Pond, Not the Fish: Following High-Ability Students Across Different Educational Environments

JUNIOR RESEARCHERS
Jae Yup Jung, University of New South Wales, Australia: The Cognitive Processes Associated with Occupational/Career Indecision: A Model for Gifted Adolescents
Tanja Gabriele Baudson, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany: Teacher Judgments as Measures of Children’s Cognitive Ability: A Multilevel Analysis
Harrison J. Kell, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University: Who Rises to the Top? Early Indicators
Peter Przemyslaw Ujma, Semmelweis University, Hungary: Sleep Spindles and Intelligence: Evidence for a Sexual Dimorphism

The list continues with further recognition of excellence in research.
A major gift to our Foundation can be a game changer: for example, the one that allowed us to fund Mensa’s Youth and Education Ambassador. But the smaller donations that come to us every year are no less important; they are the ones that sustain us in our everyday work, such as scholarships, gifted youth mini-grants and the Distinguished Teacher Award. Dr. Kishor M. Kulkarni of Florida is one such donor. Impressed with his commitment to our Foundation over the years, we asked him three questions.

Q: What made you select the Mensa Foundation as one of the charities you want to benefit?
A: I favor major charities in the fields of healthcare, disaster relief, welfare of women and children, and education. I also support organizations of my personal interest such as Mensa. I feel that by encouraging the brightest amongst us, we may see better solutions to the problems and difficulties we face.

Q: Are you active in Mensa activities?
A: During my 25-plus years in the Indianapolis area, I built up many close friendships with Mensa members and attended many monthly meetings. After my move here a few years back, I have attended several meetings in Naples, Fla. This includes my leading a discussion on suggestions for “The Next Constitutional Amendment.”

Q: Do you have a special reason for choosing education as a focus of your generosity?
A: Dedicated teachers are very important to our society. They guide young people in making important choices. I fondly remember many of my teachers throughout my life as a student.

The Mr. Mensa Pageant at the 2015 AG in Louisville, Ky., was a show to behold. Thanks to the contestants, audience and volunteers who made it happen. Most importantly, it raised about $50,000, including a $40,000 donation by Mensans Mark Glancey and John Gray to create and fund an LGBT scholarship.